



RETURN – A QUANTUM LEAP Farbrenge – 6 Tishrei, 5742-1981

Teshuva affects all Mitzvos, giving them a special quality, transforming them into even “better” deeds than before.

Our Sages use the expression, “Teshuva and good deeds.” The question has been asked: Shouldn’t the order be reversed? First, good deeds; and then, should a person find himself, G-d forbid, in a flawed state, then he must do Teshuva? Yet the Sages say “Teshuva,” and then, “good deeds?” Because even a perfect Tzaddik, who has never sinned, through Teshuva, elevates all of his deeds, making them even better than they were previously.

But why does a perfect Tzaddik require Teshuva in the first place? The answer: It says, “You shall be complete before G-d.” Since the 248 positive commandments correspond to the 248 limbs of the body, so the Tzaddik, too, requires Teshuva – which is one of those limbs.

The explanation: The Alter Rebbe explains at the beginning of this week’s Likkutei Torah, “Teshuva means ‘return of the soul to G-d who gave it,’” to reconnect with the Almighty Who gave his G-dly soul, which, in turn, gives life to the natural soul and to the body, and to one’s portion in this world.

So as righteous as a person is, as strong as his connection to G-d may be; since G-d is infinite, there is always room to connect and unite with Him more and more.

This is also the explanation for a puzzling statement of our Sages which is a living lesson, a part of the Torah of Life: “One should spend all one’s days in Teshuva.” The obvious question is: After one has repented, as defined by Torah, and he is considered a ‘Ba’al Teshuva’ how can he do Teshuva again the next day, and then again the next day? And we are told so by the Torah of Truth.

If Torah expects Teshuva, it cannot just be a procedure, but a true Teshuva.

But how can one experience true Teshuva on Sunday when he already did a sincere Teshuva on the preceding Shabbos? We’re expected to do Teshuva one day and then again on the next? According to the above, the explanation is clear.

Because we know that Teshuva is not repentance, but return. “Return of the soul to G-d, Who gave it.” And because G-d is infinite, we can continually go from strength to strength, to further intensify our bond with Him, through ever-increasing observance of all Mitzvos, but especially the Mitzva of Teshuva.

The Tzaddik does not rest, but continuously performs a higher Teshuva. Teshuva is not a gradual change but a dramatic, instantaneous one.



פרשת תצא

For this reason, Teshuva has no constraints of time. It can happen "in one hour, in one moment." Because Teshuva is "beyond all boundaries and limits." But here, a Jew may ask: "I know myself; I know my inherent limitations.

And yet, with regard to Teshuva I am expected to leap; to transcend all limitations? We are therefore told that we each have within us "a literal part of G-d above," our G-dly soul.

And it was given to us not to lie unused, like a trust; rather, it was given to become our soul, our spirit, giving life to all our doings, including our thought, speech, and deed down to the heel of the foot.

And because it is "an actual part of G-d above," Who is truly infinite, we are undoubtedly capable of achieving ever-more, there are no limits to what we can accomplish.

For it is not the strength of the individual, but the "part of G-d from above." The individual must only value it, and conduct his life in accordance with the instruction and desire of this G-dly soul.

